

REMARKS

In the January 3, 2007 Office Action, the drawings are objected to for a minor informality, the specification is objected to for minor grammatical errors, claim 1 is objected to for a minor informality, claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, and claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,756,558 to Beamer.

By the present amendment, claims 1 and 2 are canceled and new claims 3-6 are added with claim 3 being the only independent claim.

Each objection and rejection is addressed in detail below. The rejection over Beamer is respectfully traversed and will be addressed with respect to new claims 3-6.

Drawings

The drawings are objected to for several informalities. In response, a Submission of Replacement Drawing Sheets including corrected drawing figures, is submitted herewith. Applicants believe the corrected drawings address each of the objections made in the Office Action. Therefore, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the drawings.

Specification

The specification is objected to several informalities. Specifically, the abstract is objected to for a minor grammatical error. In response, line 1 of the abstract is amended to recite "quick and effective coupling of a first" as suggested in the Office Action. Also the disclosure is objected to for several informalities. In response, pages 1 and 5 of the disclosure are amended as suggested in the Office Action.

Accordingly, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections to the abstract and disclosure.

Claim Objections

Claim 1 is objected to for a minor informality. However, claim 1 has been canceled thereby obviating this objection. Applicants note that new claims 3-6 do not include reference numerals, as suggested in the Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. In response, claims 1 and 2 are canceled and new claims 3-6 are added. Applicants believe new claims 3-6 address the indefinite language noted in the Office Action.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1 and 2 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,756,558 to Beamer. Because claims 1 and 2 have been canceled, this rejection will be addressed with respect to new claims 3-6.

Independent claim 3 recites a quick connecting device comprising, among other elements, a female member with first and second circumferential protrusions, a male member with a circumferential groove, first and second sealing members disposed between the first and second circumferential portions, respectively, of the female member and the outer surface of the male member, and a fastening member disposed around the female and male members holding the female and male members in place.

Beamer fails to teach all of the claim limitations of new independent claim 3. In particular, the device of Beamer does not include a male member with a circumferential

groove nor a female member with first and second protrusions wherein the first and second sealing members are disposed between the protrusions and the outer surface of the male member. Beamer discloses a coupling 10 that includes a connector body 18 coupled with the end of a tube 12 and a nut 38 that is received on a threaded portion 22 of the connector body 18. However, as seen in Fig. 6 of Beamer, the tube 12 does not include a circumferential groove as suggested in the Office Action. The portion AA (designated in the Office Action) is not a groove. It is instead part of the outer surface of the tube 12 (the dashed lines in Figure 3 merely indicate the bottom edge of tubular body 70 and do not designate a groove). The ordinary and customary meaning of a groove is a long narrow channel or depression. Moreover, as seen in Fig. 6, no portion of the tube's outer surface is recessed or depressed. In stead, the tube 12 of Beamer actually includes a protrusion or bead 60.

Additionally, the connector body 18 of Beamer does not include first and second protrusions. Portions BB and CC (designated in the Office Action) are merely threads 22 of the body 18. There are no sealing members disposed between the threads 22 and the outer surface of the tube 12, as recited in claim 3. Therefore, Beamer fails to teach a female member with first and second protrusions, and first and second sealing members disposed between those protrusions and the outer surface of a male member.

Anticipation requires that every limitation of a claim must identically appear in a prior art reference. See *Gechter v. Davidson*, 43 U.S.P.Q. 2d 1030, 1032 (Fed. Cir. 1997). It is clear that the limitation of a male member with a circumferential groove and a female member with first and second circumferential protrusions does not identically appear in Beamer. Absence from the prior art reference of any claimed element negates anticipation. See *Rowe v. Dror*, 42 U.S.P.Q.2d 1550, 1553 (Fed. Cir. 1997).

Accordingly, because all of the elements of new independent claim 3 are not found in Beamer, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b).

Dependent claims 4-6 are also believed to be allowable over Beamer for the same reasons discussed above. Moreover, these claim recite additional features not found in the prior art. For example, dependent claim 5 recites that the first and second sealing members are first and second gaskets, respectively.

In view of the foregoing, claims 3-6 are believed to be in allowable condition. Prompt and favorable treatment is respectfully solicited.

Please charge any shortage of fees or credit any overpayment thereof to BLANK ROME LLP, Deposit Account No. 23-2185 (001058-00021). In the event that a petition for an extension of time is required to be submitted herewith and in the event that a separate petition does not accompany this report, Applicants hereby petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) for an extension of time for as many months as are required to render this submission timely. Any fee due is authorized above.

Respectfully submitted,

By: Tara L. Laster Hoffman
Tara L. Laster Hoffman
Reg. No. 46,510
Attorney for Applicant

BLANK ROME LLP
600 New Hampshire Avenue
Washington, D.C. 20037
Telephone: (202) 772-5800
Facsimile: (202) 772-5858

Date: March 26, 2007



APPENDIX A